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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4426
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 5737
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI 5061
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2575
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 1845
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2605
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2539
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SUBJECT: KENYA HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS - GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (C-CN8-00128)

¶1. As in all situations where law and order breaks down, there has been an increase in violence of all sorts, including rape. The Nairobi Women's Hospital Rape Center (NWHRC) reports a nearly 100% increase in the number of women coming in for care since the outbreak of violence in late December, compared with the same period last year. In the majority of these cases women have been gang-raped. NWHRC also reported an increase in the number of sodomy cases they are seeing, including sodomy performed on young girls and men. There is little doubt that the actual number of rapes is much higher than reported: many women do not report sexual violence or go for treatment due to the security situation or fear of stigmatization.

¶2. The Kenya Red Cross Society and other groups working in camps housing displaced people note that most residents are afraid to report or discuss sexual violence because they fear reprisals from the rapists. Camp workers doubt that women would be willing to report acts of rape to outsiders, including UN and NGO workers. Camp workers also report increasing harassment of women by state security forces (who provide security at camps) and growing concern about young women selling sex for food and other resources. There is a continued fear among women of being raped by other camp residents.

¶3. Some human rights NGOs have begun investigating sexual violence in the post-election crisis, but warned that it is too early to tell whether women were being targeted on the basis of ethnicity. Other NGOs claim that rape in and outside the camps is sanctioned by the leaders of militia groups moving around the countryside. These men are well-known to local residents and attempts are being made to persuade them to discontinue rape as a means of intimidation and punishment.

¶4. Post will continue to report about gender-based violence as more information becomes available.

RANNEBERGER